

REMARKS

Applicants reply to the Office Action dated July 26, 2007, within the shortened three month statutory period for reply. Claims 1-15 were pending in the application and the Examiner rejects claims 1-15. Support for the amendments may be found in the originally-filed specification, claims, and figures. No new matter has been introduced by these amendments. Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended in the interview of September 20, 2007, in which Applicants' representative and the Examiner's supervisor, Thai Q. Tran, discussed a proposed amendment to claim 1 and the prior art, Hanaya (U.S. Patent No. 5,754,258). The Examiner's supervisor agreed that the proposed amendments in this Reply differentiated the invention from the cited art. The following remarks are provided in light of the interview.

The Examiner rejects claims 1-12 and 14-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hanaya. The Examiner also rejects claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Hanaya. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections.

As set forth by the Examiner on page 2 of the Office Action, Hanaya discloses the release of the mute of sound (i.e., unmuting) after the completion of the channel switching. See e.g., fig. 25 and col. 22, lines 3-15. In the Advisory Action mailed on June 22, 2007, the Examiner stated, "Hanaya teaches muting the sound during switching process...". In contrast, Applicants claim muting after switching and Applicants respectfully submit claim 1 already inherently recites this feature that the Examiner admits Hanaya fails to disclose. For example, since claim 1 recites switching from the second audio signal to the first audio signal, "second audio signal" is the signal before switching and "first audio signal" is the signal after switching. As an illustrative example, when the audio signal output through the audio output terminal 112 is switched from the audio signal 130 (i.e., "second audio signal") to the external audio signal 124 (i.e., "first audio signal"), the external audio signal 124 ("first audio signal") output from the audio signal switch section 108 (i.e., output from audio output terminal 112) is muted (see page 14, lines 18-23). That is, the audio signal after switching (i.e., "first audio signal") is muted. In this regard, claim 1 already inherently recites muting after switching.

Nevertheless, to expedite prosecution, Applicants amend claim 1 to recite "a mute section for automatically muting the first audio signal which is output from the audio signal switch section after the audio signal output from the audio signal switch section is switched by the audio signal switch section from the second audio signal to the first audio signal" (emphasis added). Support for

this amendment can be found in the Description of the Preferred Embodiment at least at page 13, lines 17-24; page 14, lines 18-23; and fig. 3. Because muting the first audio signal occurs after switching, claim 1, as amended, is neither taught nor suggested by Hanaya. Indeed, by teaching unmuting after switching, Hanaya teaches away from Applicants' invention, as presently claimed. As such, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the Examiner's 102(b) and 103(a) rejections.

Applicants respectfully submit that the present application is in condition for allowance. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees, which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. **19-2814**. Applicants invite the Examiner to telephone the undersigned if the Examiner has any questions whatsoever regarding this Reply or the present application in general.

Respectfully submitted,

By: 
Howard I. Sobelman
Reg. No. 39,038

Dated: October 3, 2007

SNELL & WILMER L.L.P.
400 E. Van Buren
One Arizona Center
Phoenix, Arizona 85004
Phone: 602-382-6228
Fax: 602-382-6070
Email: hsobelman@swlaw.com